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Hello!

The weather wasn't much better in DC than in New Hampshire and there was not a single cherry blossom bloom in site. Alas, we didn't attend the AUA Summit for the weather.

It has been little over a month since returning from DC and I have already connected with other Urology residents on the SUO interview trail interested in policy and am planning on attending again next year! I found the conference to be invigorating and inspiring. In the day to day routine of residency it's easy to forget why it is that we do this and so I'm so thankful that I was able to take a step back and see Urology from a broader angle and to see how this angle impacts so many of our patients – so many real people.

Topics – or 'asks' – this year included research funding, research focus into high risk prostate cancer screening groups, and legislation on prior authorization. While prior authorization haunts me multiple times a week, the funding items are something that I certainly take for granted. I was reminded over and over again during the session of how important Urology is and how much we impact people's lives – for the better. I clearly remember sitting in David Penson's talk about the progress we have made in prostate cancer care. It was refreshing to listen to his summary and to hear him put into words something that goes beyond the trials and retrospective reviews: we do this because we make a difference. Learning the science, knowing the anatomy, conducting the research, advocating for our specialty – we do this because we make people better.

My biggest take away messages were the following. First, what we do matters. From the simple UTI that we treat to the prostate cancer that we cure, our work matters. Second, we can and we should use our talents on the macro scale. Clinics and ORs are important but so are randomized control trials. So are letters to Senators. So are legislative bills to curb prior authorization. So are cups of coffee around a large mahogany table making connections with a 21 year old legislative aide. From the cysto room to the White House – our work matters.

I hope to always find a way to practice Urology in such a way.

Making Urology Great Again,

Lael